

Message Text

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FOR GEORGE WHITE, ITP/FAS/W

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REF: CARACAS 7293

SUBJ: AGATT VIEWS ON VENEZUELA'S PROPOSED CONSULTATIONS
ON TRADE AND ECONOMIC ISSUES

1. AT THIS STAGE, THE PROPOSAL IS AT BEST, VERY VAGUE
AND OPEN TO DIFFERENT INTERPRETATIONS. IN THE COMING MONTHS,
THE DETAILS SHOULD TAKE A MORE SOLID FORM.

2. AGATT VIEWS OVERALL GOAL OF SUBJECT PROPOSAL AS AIMED AT
THE FORMATION OF AN INFORMAL GROUP COMPOSED OF HIGH LEVEL
OFFICIALS FROM BOTH VENEZUELA AND THE US. THE
PURPOSE OF THE GROUP WOULD BE TO IDENTIFY AND DISCUSS
MUTUAL PROBLEM AREAS THAT EXIST BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

3. GIVEN THE OVERALL PURPOSE OF THE GROUP WITHIN SUBJECT
MECHANISM, IT APPEARS THAT USDA INVOLVEMENT WOULD BE
MORE OR LESS UNILATERAL. WITH THE CURRENT GOVERNMENTAL
EMPHASIS ON AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THIS COUNTRY,
VENEZUELAN OFFICIALS WOULD MOST DEFINITELY WANT TO DISCUSS
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THEIR NEED FOR US TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IN AGRICULTURE.

4. AGATT VIEWS THE FOLLOWING AS POSSIBLE PROBLEM AREAS
WHERE USDA COULD TAKE THE LEAD:

A) DEVELOPMENT OF A WORKABLE EXTENSION SERVICE SIMILAR
TO THAT IN OPERATION IN THE US. INITIAL RESEARCH

WOULD BE TARGETED IN THE CEREALS SECTORS, PRIMARILY CORN AND SORGHUM AND THE LIVESTOCK AND POULTRY SECTORS;
B) ESTABLISHMENT OF A SATELLITE CROP FORECASTING SYSTEM;
C) DEVELOPMENT OF A RURAL ROADS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM;
D) DEVELOPMENT OF A VIABLE STORAGE FACILITY PROGRAM FOR AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES;
E) ESTABLISHMENT OF A LONG-TERM PROGRAM FOR TRAINING VENEZUELAN AGRICULTURAL TECHNICIANS IN THE US OR ON THE JOB IN VENEZUELA; AND
F) CREATION OF A MEANINGFUL EXCHANGE PROGRAM FOR AGRICULTURAL EXPERTS.

COMMENT: WHILE SUBJECT MECHANISM, ONCE OPERATIONAL, COULD BE BENEFICIAL TO BOTH COUNTRIES, IT APPEARS THAT THE TIMING OF THE PROPOSAL IS AT BEST QUESTIONABLE. THIS IS AN ELECTION YEAR IN VENEZUELA. THE NEW ADMINISTRATION WILL TAKE OFFICE NEXT MARCH. CONSEQUENTLY, ANY CONSTLTATIONS BEGUN NOW UNDER THE PRESENT ADMINISTRATION WILL HAVE DIFFERENT PRINCIPALS, IF ANY, NEXT YEAR.
CROWLEY

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